

WASHINGTON – Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer, a senior member of the House Ways & Means and Budget Committees, submitted the following statement to the Congressional Record in regards to the end of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy:

"Today, we move one step closer towards full equality by ending the immoral and irresponsible practice of discriminating against courageous Americans who want to serve their country. I am proud to have voted again and again for Don't Ask Don't Tell's repeal because I know – and the military has told us – that ending this policy will strengthen our armed forces.

"A comprehensive report from the Defense Department found that of the 400,000 service members and 150,000 military spouses, 70% of military personnel thought the repeal would be positive, mixed, or no consequence. This is a remarkable finding, and makes the policy seem all the more indefensible for the more than 14,000 service members who have been discharged.

"Brave Americans have served and sacrificed in silence for years while the military enforced a discriminatory and harmful policy. Today this policy is officially a thing of the past, a relic of a different time.

"The road to equality is long, winding, and will have many bumps along the way. Today, I have the 14,000 discharged service members in my thoughts as we celebrate the end of an era of discrimination. Tomorrow, we will get back to work, fighting for the Employment and Student Non Discrimination Acts, the Safe Schools Improvement Act, and the Respect for Marriage Act that will overturn DOMA."